

### Guiding Principles for Implementing RSA Chapter 457-A:

1. The Executive Branch will implement the Civil Union law in accordance with its legislative intent and effective date, in a manner that shows respect and provides equal treatment to all.
2. The law describes civil unions and marriages as separate and distinct legal relationships. The rights, obligations, and responsibilities conferred under state law for both legal relationships are identical.
3. Reference to a legal status derived from marriage or a civil union in a State issued form or publication should distinctly recognize each.

### Specific Recommendations for State Issued Forms and Publications:

1. Forms which directly address a marriage or a civil union, for example an application for a marriage license or civil union license should be separate forms.
  - a. Marriage application
  - b. Civil union application
2. Forms which indirectly address a marriage or a civil union, for example a form which requires the listing of a spouse, should separately provide for listing the name of a civil union partner.
  - a. Where a form makes reference to husband or wife, it should use the term “partner to a civil union” as the equivalent legal status for a person who is a party to a civil union.
  - b. Where a form makes reference to a spouse, it should use the term “partner to a civil union” as the equivalent legal status for a person who is a party to a civil union.
3. Documents that are used to establish a legal relationship or status and which affect a government right, privilege, benefit, or liability, should receive a the highest priority in being re-written to reflect the distinct status of being married or being a party to a civil union.
4. Documents that are used to collect information, but which do not affects rights, privileges, governmental benefits or liabilities, should receive a priority in being re-written to reflect the distinct status of being married or being a party to a civil union.
5. Documents that are informational in nature may be temporarily brought into conformance with this change to the laws by adding language that cites the civil union law and establishes that terms such a spouse are legally understood to have an equivalent legal effect on a partner to a civil union.